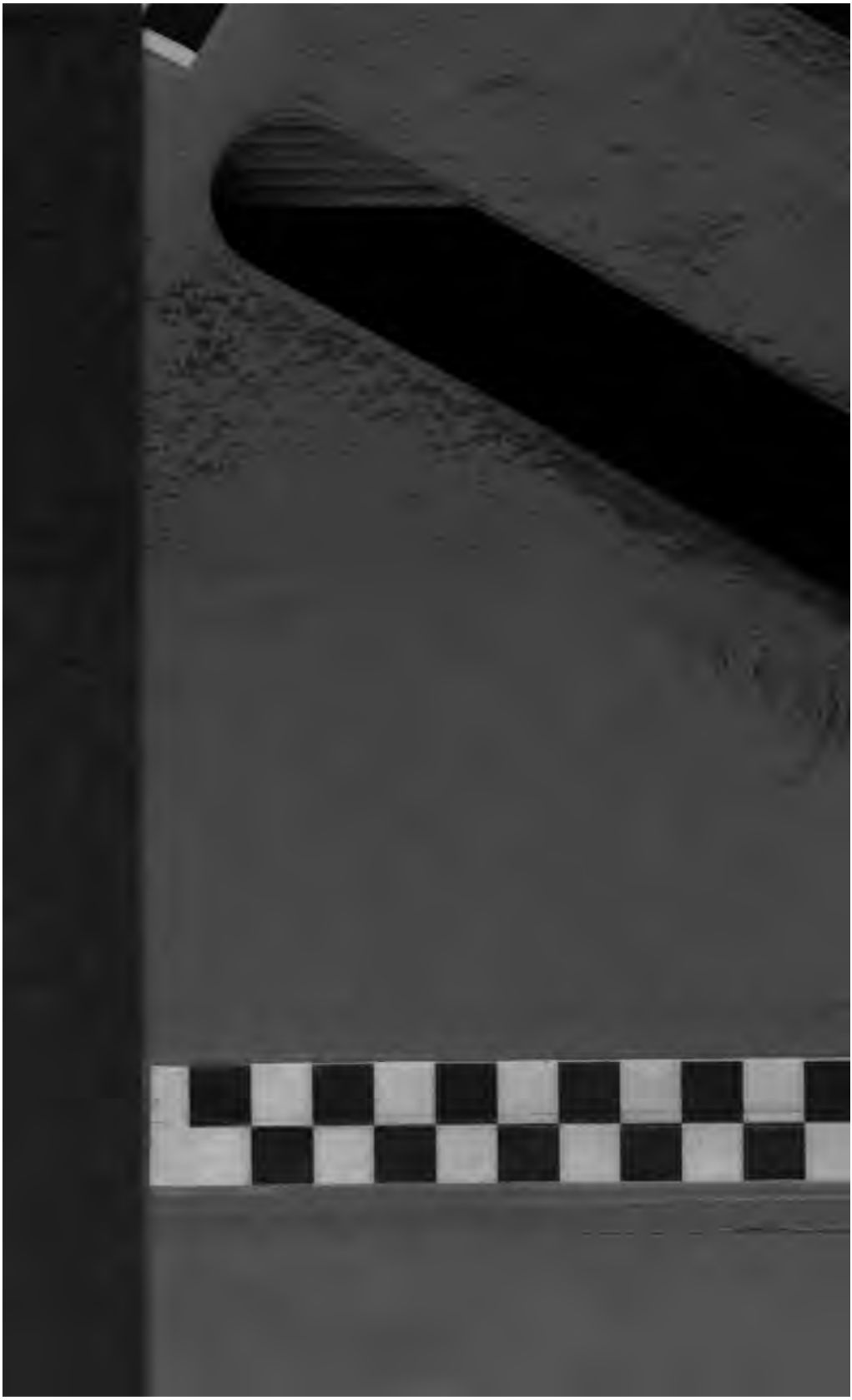

THE GRAND

ENGLISH OPERA

COMBINATION:

Caroline Richings Bernard.
Directress of the Operas.

C. D. Hess & Co.
Managing Directors.

THE

HUGUENOTS

Grand Opera in Five Acts.

BY MEYERBEER.

AS TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED BY CAROLINE RICHINGS BERNARD.

Price 35 Cents.

PHILADELPHIA:
LEDGER JOB PRINTING OFFICE.
1870.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MARGUERITE DE VALOIS.
VALENTINE, Daughter of the Count de St. Bris.
URBAIN, Page of Marguerite.
FIRST LADY OF HONOR.
SECOND LADY OF HONOR.
SIR RAOUL DE NANGIS, A Huguenot Gentleman.
MARCEL, A Huguenot Soldier, and Servant to Raoul.
COSSE.
THORE.
TAVANNES.
BOIS ROSE, Huguenot Soldier.
NIGHTWATCH.
COUNT DE ST. BRIS.
COUNT DE NEVERS.
DE RETZ.
MERU.
MAUREVERT.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Court, Citizens, Soldiers, Students, Monks, etc., etc.

The action is supposed to take place during the month of August, 1572. *The first and second acts in Tourraine, all the others in Paris.*

ARGUMENT.

A short time previous to the massacre of the Huguenots on the eve of St. Bartholemew, a young Protestant gentlemen, Raoul de Nangis, having, through the interest of Admiral Coligny, received a commission in the army, is introduced to his brother officers assembled at the chateau of the Count de Nevers, a Catholic nobleman, of gay and dissipated manners. During the festivities given by De Nevers, it is proposed that each of the company shall relate his amours, and it is decided that the bashful Raoul shall begin.

The new comer relates the manner in which he rescued a lady from the rude hands of a party of students; and how, smitten by her beauty, he lost his heart; but who the lady was he knew not. Raoul is accompanied by a faithful servant, Marcel, a strict and stern Huguenot, who is horror-struck when he sees his master drinking with the Catholic officers.

While the feast is at its height, a veiled lady is seen to enter the garden, conducted by a servant of De Nevers, with whom she requests an audience, but the latter for some time refuses to rise from the table; at length, however, he proceeds to meet her, while the curiosity of the guests being raised, they all obtain a glance at the lady by looking through the half-open curtains of the room in which she has been introduced; no one is acquainted with her, until at length Raoul in his turn looks, and recognizes the lady he rescued from the students.

De Nevers, after respectfully taking leave of his fair visitor, returns to his friends. The lady, it appears, is maid of honor to Queen Margaret of Valois, and has been promised in marriage to De Nevers, but at the desire of Margaret she waits on her intended husband to urge him to release her from her promise; to this, like a generous knight, he agrees. The lady's name is Valentine, the daughter of the Count of St. Bris.

While the disappointed Raoul is venting his spleen, Urbain, Page to Queen Margaret, enters, bringing a letter to the young soldier; the letter informs him that about midday he will be sought for, and be led away by a messenger, who has orders to blindfold him before he leaves the spot. Rather than appear a coward he promises to follow the messenger; but he is at the same time astonished at the alteration in the manner of his companions, who crowd round him respectfully, offering him their services, for, although he knows it not, they are aware from whom the messenger came.

Valentine is also deeply in love with Raoul, and the Queen having, by her management, released her from her promise to De Nevers, determines to marry the lovers, and for that purpose the young soldier is conducted blindfold to the gardens, in which Margaret and her ladies are enjoying themselves; dazzled by the beauty of Margaret, but not aware that she is the Queen, he promises to do all her bidding; when, however, her rank is discovered, she informs him of her intention of giving him in marriage to a Catholic lady, Valentine, the daughter of the Count de St. Bris; the knight promises obedience; but when Valentine is introduced before him, he refuses the alliance under the impression that her affections have already been

bestowed on another. St. Bris challenges the young soldier to mortal combat for the insult thus offered to his daughter, but the Queen interposes and disarms the intended combatants.

The match being thus broken off, Valentine is persuaded to marry De Nevers; but immediately after the ceremony she entreats permission to pass the remainder of the day at the foot of the altar in prayer. Raoul being released from attendance on the Queen, repairs to Paris and challenges De Bris to meet him at the Pre aux Clercs. Bent on treachery, St. Bris leads his friend Maurevert into the chapel in which Valentine is praying, and there discloses a plot to murder Raoul; this has been overheard by Valentine, and, horror-struck at the treacherous act, the new-made bride meets with Marcel, who has concealed himself that he may be present at the duel, and to him she imparts the intentions of his master's opponents. Marcel remains on the spot, being unable to meet his master and inform him of the plot. At the appointed time the combatants meet—Raoul and Marcel are attacked by a party of armed men, but a band of Protestants, from an adjoining tavern, rush in to their assistance, and the battle becomes general, until Margaret de Valois enters on horseback and inquires the cause of the disturbance; Marcel declares the intended treason of which he was informed by Valentine, who, at that instant, appears at the chapel gate, and St. Bris, tearing off her veil, is thunder-struck at seeing his daughter.

Raoul at the same moment learns that Valentine loved him alone, but at this instant De Nevers enters to lead his bride home. At night the unhappy lover repairs secretly to De Nevers' chateau, and obtains an interview with Valentine, but on the entrance of her husband and father he conceals himself, and overhears a plot to massacre the whole of the Protestants; to assist in this all swear, excepting De Nevers, who is placed under arrest by the rest of the conspirators.

As soon as the Catholic Lords have parted, Raoul prepares to leave the chateau and proceed to warn his friends, but at length, persuaded by Valentine, who clings to him and declares her love, he consents to remain; but when he hears the signal for the massacre, he tears himself from her arms and rushes out.

Meanwhile the Protestant Lords are assembled at the Hotel de Sens, at the invitation of Margaret and Henry the IV. In the midst of their revels Raoul rushes in, pale and with bloody garments, and informs them of the massacre, which has commenced on the opposite banks of the river; the whole assembly at once draw their swords and rush off the stage.

Marcel, wounded, points out to a body of Huguenot women a chapel as a place of refuge; Valentine offers pardon to Raoul, in the Queen's name, if he will adopt her faith, but on his refusal, she agrees to become a Protestant, and De Nevers having perished in an endeavor to save the life of old Marcel, the unhappy pair pledge their troth and are married on the spot.

A loud cry is now heard in the church, during the massacre of the women; at the same instant several murderers rush on the stage and attack Marcel, Raoul and Valentine, and drag them off the stage.

THE HUGUENOTS.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE.—*A saloon in the castle of* COUNT DE NEVERS, *opening on a beautiful garden. On the right hand, a door opening to an inner apartment. On the left, a window, supposed to command a view into a Chapel. The* COUNT DE NEVERS, TAVANNES, DE COSSE, DE RETZ, MERU, RAOUL *and other noblemen seated at the table.*

CHORUS.

Fill, fill to the joys of the table,
Crown ev'ry cup in its foam;
Kill time as fast as we're able;
Drown him in bright wine.
Rosy Bacchus over our revels presiding,
To his care our evening's pleasure confiding,
While thus gayly onward the moments are gliding,
All our souls to wine we'll resign,

Nevers. Old Care defying with joyous song,
Tavannes. 'Neath his bright banner we march along;
All. Sparkling libations to him we pour—
Bacchus, bright Bacchus, we thee adore!
Chorus. Fill, fill to the joys of the table, etc.
Nev. Come fill up to the brim, and let us touch glasses.
Come, Sir Raoul, and let us drink to those we love.
Now, by those looks, and by that tone of languor,
That beam within your eye, I know that you are in love.
Raoul. What say you?—I?
Nev. Youthful ardor permits it;
But by his mighty pow'r to-morrow Hymen binds me.
I have forswoon for aye the chains of love,
And from this fatal moment I fear I cause the sorrow
Of many a weeping fair, whose tears for me will flow!
Tav. Now, sirs, new zest to give our feast,
Let each one in turn now endeavor
The story of his loves to relate.
Nev. Yes: agreed with all my heart!
'Tis for the last new-comer to begin.
Cho. That's true.

Rao. To that I agree, if I may preserve the honor
Of the lady I love.
Nev. Pray tell us first who is she?
Rao. I cannot tell.
Nev. But what's her name?
Rao. I know not.
Nev. Indeed! is't true? Now, gentlemen, be silent;
The story will amuse.

RECITATIVE.

Rao. One day, when near the towers of the ancient Amboise, I chanced alone to wander, when at the pathway's turning a richly-decked litter came suddenly before me. A band of young wild students were crowding most discourteously around. Their noisy shouts, their cries, left me no doubt of their most vile intentions. I then rushed forward. At sight of me they fled. I then advanced still nearer.

ROMANCE.

Rao. What lovely vision was there!
Oh how enchanting the form met my view!
Fairer far e'en than fairest lily;
Than spring morn, more pure and more lovely and bright.
An angel of heaven-born beauty
Burst upon my ravish'd sight.
Oh she was charming, past all expression!
And as before her form divine I bent my knee,
I faltered forth, "Fair angel,
Sure thou com'st from heav'n above:
For evermore will I love none but thee!"
All. Truly such candor really is charming;
Brightest eyes, how bewitching they be!
Rao. Sweetly she smiled
As I trembled by her side,
Sighing the passion
Which e'en her tongue to speak denied,
And in her eyes brightly the love-light gleamed,
On her brow affection beamed.
Bidding me hope still her heart to gain,
Bidding me echo still the strain.
I faltered forth, "Fair angel," etc.
All. Truly such candor really is charming, etc.

[*Enter* MARCEL.]

Cosse. But what strange-looking mortal
Here makes his appearance?
Rao. 'Tis a faithful old follower, who from childhood hath served me.
Marcel. Sir Raoul, eh, at table with them?
Ah, dear master, we are told, "With the wicked feast thou not,
Nor have thou aught to do."
Meru, (laughing.) 'Tis a good old saint of Israel—
Mar. In the camp of the Philistines.
Nev. and Cho. What said he?
Rao. Pray you pardon. He knows but a soldier's manner; from his earliest year by our faith has been taught to condemn and to hate the Pope and all his power.

Mar. (*with earnestness.*) Truly so.

Rao. Still he loves me. He has a heart most generous—
Though rough in speech is a true, sterling gem.

(*To Marcel.*) Come, then, attend us and silent be, if such a thing be possible.

Mar. I obey you. (*Aside.*) From their wiles how can I save him?

Nev. and Meru, (*drinking.*) Now, sirs, to our mistresses drink we.

Rao. and Cos. We'll drink to our loves and our loved ones.

Mar. Had I a great Calvin's voice,
Whoe'er might on me frown,
I'd raise it high aloft;
Thus their songs I would drown.
O Thou who art our only guide
And guard 'gainst ev'ry earthly ill,
Turn not thy face from us aside,
But in each strait protect us still.
The serpent-tempter's net
Spreadeth for his prey;
Our path he doth beset;
Our souls he would betray.
Thy servants do not forget,
But guard us, save us, we pray.

Nev. Come, drink!

Rao. No!

Meru. (*to Raoul.*) What says he now?

Rao. (*in an impressive voice.*) 'Tis the pray'er, writ by Calvin, when grief or danger threatens we offer to Heaven.

Cos. (*attentively regarding Marcel.*) But, if my eyes do not deceive me, this is a soldier brave whom I encountered at Rochelle.

Mar. (*much pleased.*) You then remember me?

Cos. But too well, by my faith, and this same scar see.

Mar. Was given to you by me.

Rao. Nay, peace, Marcel.

Cos. (*gayly.*) 'Twas fairly given in battle; and now to prove I bear no ill, we'll drink together.

Mar. Pray pardon, I cannot drink.

Cos. (*laughing.*) With sinners like to me?

Rao. Excuse him, sir, I pray.

Nev. Ah, well! if you'll not drink, you'll sing, sir!

Rao. But, good sir—

Cos. Yes, in truth, he must sing.

Mar. Sirs, I will. 'Tis an old Huguenot song against the snares of Rome and the dark wiles of women. You, sirs, should know it well, for it is our battle-song; you heard it at Rochelle, for there 'twas sung 'mid clang of drums and trumpets: joined to the din of the piff, paff, piff of bullets from the ranks it rang out.

HUGUENOT SONG.

Mar. Piff, paff, piff, paff,
Old Rome and her revelries,
Her pride and her lust, boys!
The monks and their devilries,
We grind them to dust, boys!
Deliver to fire and sword their temples of hell,
Till of the black demons none live to tell.

Down with them! Slay them all, ev'ry soul!
Slaughter them! Piff, paff, piff, slay them all,
All vainly for aid or for mercy they call;
No pity for them! No, they die, slay all!

Cho. Ha! ha! ha! what a dear lamb-like soul!
Pray have mercy on us! Thank you! mercy!

Mar. Woe to all defilers fair!
I ne'er heard their shrinking;
Woe to the Delilahs fair
Who men's souls are seeking!
Deliver to fire and sword
Those children of hell,
Till of the black demons
None live to tell!
All vainly for aid or for mercy they call!
No pity for them! no, they die—slay all!

[*Enter a servant of the* COUNT DE NEVERS, *and whispers to the* COUNT.]

Serv. To the master of this house,
The Count de Nevers,
One without would speak.

Nev. Were it the king *in persona* he can go back!

Mar. What! unholy blasphemer!

Serv. But it is a young, beauteous dame!

Nev. What a lady, you say?
I'm truly in request, sirs;
They follow me in flocks:
'Tis really past belief!
Good gentlemen, excuse me,
But continue, I pray,
And let me not disturb you.
The banquet we've begun,
Interrupted by love, may be renewed again,
Ere many moments pass,
With the zest friendship gives.

[*Exit* DE NEVERS *and Servant, followed to the doorway by the Guests, who afterward return, laughing, to the front.*]

Tav. 'Tis a singular adventure.

De Retz. His good fortune is most strange.

(*Several of the party approach the window, and look into the adjoining Chapel.*)

Rao. Oh, Heaven!

All. What is it?

Rao. (*to Marcel.*) Ah this lady, so beautiful and youthful,
Is the same whom I saved,
I told you of but now.
'Tis this one.

All. Truly?

Rao. Yes. I am quite sure.

Meru. 'Tis this one!

DE NEVERS *is seen to pass through the garden with a lady veiled, whom he salutes respectfully, and takes leave.*)

[*Enter* NEVERS—*pensively advances down the stage, without taking notice of his visitors. All the Guests make way for him.*]

All. All hail the conqueror,
Whose all-entrancing pow'r
Still bids each beauty bend
In love and adoration!
He reigns in ev'ry heart,
And by his magic art,
For him love strews with flow'rs,
The joyous, rosy hours.

[*Enter* URBAIN.]

Nev. My gentle page, what brings you to my château?
Urb. Noble signors, I salute you
A most charming, noble lady,
Whom with envy kings might view,
With a message here has charged me,
Cavaliers, to one of you,
I do not name him,
But honor be unto the good knight,
Whoe'er he be!
And until now, sirs, there ne'er hath been
Mortal so favored by beauty's queen.
Do not fear the least deception,
Noble knights, in my discourse.
Now farewell! may Heav'n kindly
You protect in love or war.
Nev. The sky to-day rains lovely damsels in a shower
On me, I think, but so't must be.
But to resist the sex I never had the power.
That dainty note now give to me, (*to Urbain.*)
Urb. Are you, then, Sir Raoul de Nangis?
Nev. What say you?
Urb. For to him this note it is I'm bearing.
All. Ah! great Heaven!
Mar. (*proudly.*) 'Tis for my good master. Yes! he is there! Yes! that is he.
Rao. How! for me?
Urb. Yes, for you. (*Handing him the letter.*)
Rao. (*reading.*) "Before the close of day, Sir Raoul de Nangis, a carriage from the Court will waiting be. You must enter in silence; your eyes will closely veil. You must trust other guidance, unless your courage fail you."
(*Angrily.*) Indeed! Some one would mock me.
A sorry mode of jesting,
But it may cost them dear.
Be't as it may, I'll venture:
Pray read it yourselves, sirs.
(*Handing the letter to* NEVERS, *who reads it.*)
Nev. Ah! great Heaven! (*Nevers hands it to* MERU.)
Meru. How surprising! (*Meru hands it to* COSSE.)
Cos. 'Tis her writing! (*Cosse hands it to* TAVANNES.)
Tav. 'Tis her signet!
All. Can it be? 'Tis her writing!
'Tis most sure his fortune's made.
(*All approach* RAOUL *and shake him by the hand.*)

Urb., Nobles and Men. See! what joy, honor high,
Rank and wealth now await you;
Sparkling bright, beauty's eye,
Now with rapture will meet you,
Ev'ry hope, ev'ry joy,
Ev'ry pleasure will greet you.
Quick away—beauty calls;
Love and glory be thine.

All. He must be favored
For whom beauty and fortune combine—
Quick away! 'tis beauty that calls thee!
Oh, Raoul, depart! away!

[END OF THE FIRST ACT.]

ACT THE SECOND.

The Scene represents the Castle and Gardens of Chenonceaux, with a broad flight of steps on the right hand.

MARGUERITE *is discovered surrounded by her maids, who have just finished her toilet.*

Marg. O sweet Tourraine, in beauty beaming!
O sunny glades, with fountains gleaming!
Mazy brook, softly murm'ring,
My life, like thee, I'll dream away!
It fills my heart with sadness
That for a vain chimera
This fair scene may soon be stained by warfare.
Oh that men in their madness
Should with their hate so cruel
Thus mar the beauty of this fair land!

Marg., Urb. and Ladies. But hence with sorrow!
Care we will banish;
Quick let it vanish
Far, far away!
Youth is a treasure,
Which while enjoying
To love and pleasure
Our court we pay.

Marg. In this land where I reign,
From mountain to the main,
All echo now the strain of love.
All the angels repeating
In murm'ring accents,
And the tender lamenting
Of the dove's mellow cooing,
The streamlets softly play,
To echo still the strain,
While the earth, sky and sea,
Are repeating the lay.

For at that word of power
Each bird, each beast, each flower,
All Nature springs rejoicing
Through earth and air and sky.
The rippling stream repeats it,
In gentle murmurs greets it.
The winds, the waters,
With tuneful voice rejoicing reply,
'Tis love! 'tis love!

Urb. (*looking toward* MARGUERITE, *and sighing.*) How beautiful, how charming, alas!

Marg. Who comes here? see!

[*Enter* VALENTINE.]

Urb. 'Tis the fairest among ladies, ever most fair.
Marg. Valentine approach and do not fear.
Urb. All love would console her if you do deign and pity.
Marg. I have seen all her sorrow and her grief,
And my heart to pity has been moved.
Urb. Then I shall laugh no more. [*Exit.*
Marg. My daughter, approach, take courage,
And tell me quickly now of thy most strange adventure.
Val. The Count de Nevers, on his honor,
Has promised to refuse my hand.
Marg. All then will be easy.
Leave everything to me,
And thou shall soon wedded be.
Val. What do I hear?
Marg. Ah! thou blushest, my child.
Dost love him then so well?
Val. I dare not think of love;
But my father—?
Marg. Have no fear; I will confer with him.
Val. Yes, but Raoul?
Marg. Know then he hither comes,
Val. Oh, Heav'ns! I shall not dare to meet him.
Marg. Indeed! not dare to meet him?
'Tis I must then see him for you.

[*Re-enter the Maids of Honor, followed by Village girls.*]

Ladies. Beneath the shades the flow'rs were sleeping,
The weary breeze in silence creeping,
The silver dews their lambs were keeping
In sheltered nook, or flowret's breast:
I heard the stream then onward straying,
Its ripples break, in murmurs playing;
While mem'ry sang, with years decaying.
"I'll ne'er forget this vale of rest."

[*Enter* URBAIN.]

Marg. I thank ye for such words of affection:
How now? What are you seeking here, Master Urbain?
Urb. (*confused.*) Who I? Of my gracious queen I here wait the orders,
To her lightest word obedient.
Marg. 'Tis well. I had forgot your presence here

In truth, sir; therefore, for this time, I forgive.
Good page, you must retire, and come not back until I call.

Urb. (*with distress.*) Ah, what cruel fate!
How can I exist so far away? [*Exit.*

Ladies. Beneath the shades, etc.

[*Enter* URBAIN, *from amidst a group of Damsels.*]

Marg. You here again? 'Tis too audacious, Sir Urbain.

Urb. I pray you pardon—a cavalier.

(VALENTINE *and Ladies show signs of agitation.*)

All. A cavalier!

Urb. I pray you calm your fears.
A thick black veil his features covers.

Marg. 'Tis well, sir; 'tis Raoul.

Urb. He is here on a most blindfold adventure.

Marg. 'Tis he! All goes well to my wishes.

Val. Madam, pray let me fly.

Marg. 'Tis my will you remain.

Urb. Calm your fears, and list to this adventure.
No! no! no! you have not heard, I will engage,
So strange a tale, as this is,
Told by a youthful page.
No! no! no! and the maidens of the village
Will not the vision soon forget.
Crowds of persons flocked around him;
O'er his eyes a veil of black he'd bound him,
Thus this cavalier appeared,
Gliding like a shadow all around,
With feet that do but lightly touch the ground,
And young ones and old the vision behold,
Saying, "What is it?"
And then, "Where is it?
"And whom does it seek?"
No! no! no! you have not heard, etc., etc.
Oh what a jest! but let us stay our laughter.
There must be a secret we cannot discover.
Which Love would fain conceal.
Ah, Love! That pow'rful king doth here disport
And 'midst these groves still holds his court!
Some secret must here be concealed,
That may this day perchance be revealed.
Sly Cupid is playing his part,
And in jest may exert all his art.
The merry god doth here disport,
And 'midst these gay groves
These bowers he roves,
Delights here to hold his court.
See, no one may this knight behold,
But, groping, he tries his way to find:
Groups of boys,
With shouting noise,
Follow him in sport
While the maidens in show'rs,
Throw on him sweetest flowers!

An astonishing pageant,
Quite charming to see.
His eyes a veil conceals from view.
Yet still the maidens his steps pursue.
Nigh to the castle he comes, we may see.
Oh what a treat for us there will be!
Oh what a treat!
He comes—he is near!
See, he advances!
Behold! he is here!

[*Enter* RAOUL, *with his eyes bandaged. He is led from the steps to the front. Some of the ladies look at him attentively and retreat, while others surround him.*]

Ladies. It is he; now be silent. He is near;
He is here; he advances.
Marg. So brave a knight well deserves to be rewarded;
Therefore thus from your promise I now absolve you:
You may the veil remove, sir.
Rao. O Heaven! where have I wandered?
Is this but a wild dream,
Some bright illusion of my fancy?

DUETT.

Rao. Beauty bright, divine, lovely enchantress!
O thou who to my raptured sight art given,
Oh tell me, I pray thee,
Art mortal or goddess?
Am I on earth or now in heaven?
Speak, oh speak, beauty bright,
And add to my delight.
Marg. (*aside.*) Ah now, indeed, I can full well divine
How she hath, too, the voice of love obeyed:
He's really charming!
No queen nor princess
Could e'er a better choice have made.
Rao. A humble cavalier begs his service to offer.
Marg. But first, of his obedience
'Tis meet he gives some token.
Rao. (*with fervor.*) Ah! at thy feet now hear me swear!
But speak thou thy desires
And gladly I will obey:
I swear it by my faith!
Marg. (*aside.*) Ah! If I were coquettish!
Ah! Here's a situation!
What a palpitation!
But no! 'twould not do.
On my faith relying,
She for him is dying,
Though 'tis rather trying;
To her I'll be true!
Rao. (*with vigor.*) To you now my heart I freely proffer—
To you both my honor and my sword;
And even death would suffer
For Heaven and my adored.

Marg. (*Aside.*) My heart now beats fast and strongly.
(*Aloud.*) Pray sir, believe me, my only wish
Is soon your happiness to seal.
Rao. Thine my faith! thine my sword evermore!
On my faith relying,
With courage undying,
All danger defying,
To thee I'll be true!

[*Enter the Nobles of the Court—the Catholics on one side, the Protestants on the other. The Queen presents* RAOUL *to* ST. BRIS *and* NEVERS, *who receive him with great courtesy. A gentleman of the Court presents a royal despatch to* MARGUERITE.]

FINALE AND OATH.

Marg. (*to* ST. BRIS *and* NEVERS, *after reading despatch.*)
Charles, my royal brother,
Your seal for him well knowing,
Wills that you to Paris
Forthwith both do hasten
On private matters to me unknown.
Nev. and St. Bris. His will is law; we must obey.
Marg. Yes, but first attend to mine, sirs.
By the marriage vow
That each this day shall be plighted,
No more shall hate prevail,
No more your lives assail,
But each shall promise peace
From party feud or strife
And you, too, noble lordships,
To this oath must be plighted.

(RAOUL, NEVERS, ST. BRIS *and the Nobles gather round the Queen and take the oath.*)

All. By our faith, by our hopes,
By the faith of our fathers,
Yes, we swear!
By our king, by our swords,
Which to our care are confided,
Yes, we swear!
By our God, whose dread vengeance
Ever lights on the traitor,
Yes, we swear!
Before the Queen we now swear:
Peace and friendship be ours.
Mar. By our faith, by our hopes,
By the faith of our fathers,
Yes, we swear?
By our king, by our swords,
Which to our care are confided,
Yes, we swear!
By our God, whose dread vengeance
Ever lights on the traitor,
Yes, we swear!
It ne'er shall be: neither peace,
Neither friendship be ours.

Cho. Yes, we swear!
By our faith, by our hopes,
By our king, by our swords,
By our God, who can punish
Ev'ry traitor, we now swear
Before the Queen!

Rao., Nev. and St. Bris. O kind Heaven,
Gentle mother,
Consecrate this rite so holy!
By thy power now unite us,
Guard each brother's sacred faith!

Mar. O kind Heaven,
Gentle mother,
To thy children grant the power
In this solemn, trying hour
Oh guard each brother's faith!

Marg. Oh may kind Heaven all your hearts direct,
And ev'ry oath respect! [*Exit* ST. BRIS.
(*To Raoul.*) And now, sir, I'll present to you the lady,
Your beauteous betrothed.
To fulfill every promise,
'Tis not so hard a task.

[*Re-enter* ST. BRIS, *leading* VALENTINE *toward* RAOUL.]

Rao. (*with a stifled voice.*) O great Heaven! what see I?

Marg. Why all this terror?

Rao. This lady! She
And her hand now you offer?

Marg. In holy love be united.

Rao. Ah! what treachery!
Ah! what insult!
I, her husband! no! never! no!

All. Heavens!

Marg., Urb. and Ladies. Oh what shame! oh what madness, her hand thus refusing!
By this insult, this outrage our patience abusing.

Val. Oh what shame to reject thus my hand!
Every hope now is fled for ever from my heart.

Rao. Oh what shame! oh what madness, her hand thus refusing!
By this insult, this boldness my patience abusing.
Though their rage may avenge, every hope may overturn,
Never shall I this marriage confirm;
Still my sword shall avenge this foul blow.

Nev. and St. Bris. Oh what shame! oh what madness, her hand thus refusing!
By this insult, this outrage our patience abusing.
Soon my rage shall avenge this offence in his blood!
Honor calls me to revenge—such an insult to avenge!

Mar. Oh what joy fills my heart thus to see him refusing!
'Tis the pride of his heart:
He is right to refuse.
Heaven his courage hath inspired,
And his rage his heart has fired—
Honor calls him to break his rash vow.

Cho. Oh what shame! oh what madness, her hand thus refusing!
By this insult, this outrage our patience abusing.

For revenge soon his blood must flow
To avenge such a blow.

Val. How deserved I such an insult—
Thus with scorn my love repelling,
Thus to brand me with outrage?
With grief my heart is swelling.

Rao. Now with sorrow and with anger
Is my heart indignant swelling.

Nev. and St. Bris. Ah with rage and with hate
Is my heart indignant swelling.
Depart! thy blood must pay this stain.

Rao. Yes, depart! my sword must clear this stain.

Marg. I command ye stay your anger.
Thus to brave me ye are daring.
You, Raoul, give up your sword, sir.
(*To St. Bris.*) And you, sir, will remember
The King for you now awaits
To-day at the Court.

Rao. I follow him.

Marg. No, here at my side you must now remain.

St. Bris. How fortunate a duty
That in this very hour
You protect him with thy power!

Marg. Thou audacious!

Rao. (*to St. Bris.*) She disarms me, she protects thee;
But soon I'll meet thee, be certain.

Nev. and St. Bris. Yes, this hand such a stain
In thy blood shall avenge.
Honor calls for revenge
Such offence to avenge.

Mar. Yes, my heart now with pride is swelling,
His courage scorn repelling.
Now hence away!
With his sword he'll repay.
O Thou who art our only guide,
Turn not thy face from us aside.

TABLEAU.

[END OF THE SECOND ACT.]

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE.—*A meadow on the banks of the Seine. On the left an inn, near which several Catholic students and young girls are seated. On the right, another inn, where various Huguenots are seen drinking and playing at dice. In the background the exterior of a Chapel. The back of the stage is crowded with persons of every description, passing to and fro.*

CHORUS OF CITIZENS.

From our labors reposing,
With gay dance and with song,
Now in mirth and in revelry
The hours pass along.

CHORUS OF HUGUENOT SOLDIERS.

Rataplan, rataplan, rataplan!
(*Imitating with their hands the beating of the drum.*)
On the foe like lightning flying,
Papist wolves to death defying.
He cried, Come on who would be free;
Now come on and follow me.
Your old and faithful captain leads you,
To death or victory precedes you!
Who would be free
To victory now follow me!
Warriors brave our armies swelling,
Riches great our coffers telling,
The daughters of our foemen
All must yield to our power.
To us belongs all strength in arming,
While stores of wine our spirits charming,
With potent draught inspired
We pass every hour.
Long live our captain brave! long live he!
Drink to our father Coligny!

(*At this moment the bridal cortège of* NEVERS *and* VALENTINE, *followed by their relations and friends, advances toward the chapel.*)

LITANY.

Ave Maria!
O holy Virgin,
Look down upon us,
And pardon ask.
Thou can'st protect us;
This be thy task!
Ave Maria!
O holy Virgin!

[*Enter* MARCEL, *without removing his hat.*]

Mar. The Seigneur de San Bris?
Cho. You cannot speak to him.
Mar. Why not?
Cho. Your knee lowly bending.
Mar. And pray thee why should I do so?
Here I behold no altar.
Bois Rose. He is quite right!
Cho. Rataplan, etc.
Cho. of Catholics. Profaners, blasphemers,
O ye lost ones,
Your souls will perish!
O profane and impious pagans,
Who on earth must suffer,
And in death again.

[*Enter* ST. BRIS, NEVERS *and* MAURIEVERT *from the chapel.*]

Nev. to St. Bris. Now to fulfill a sacred cherished vow!
In solemn prayer even at the altar's foot
Valentine desires alone to linger:

To her wish I have yielded,
And, followed by my friends, will return
Soon to seek the joys most dear,
And bid her welcome home
With heart sincere. [*Exit.*

St. Bris. And thus by this alliance with a name illustrious
The outrage of Raoul
I have thus fitly punished,
But forget it I cannot,
And if he should cross my path—

Mar. (*entering with a letter in his hand and with an air of importance.*) For the Count de San Bris!
This letter I bear from my noble master, who bids me—

St. Bris, (*interrupting him.*) Give it!
'Tis from Raoul!
At last he has returned. (*Reads the letter.*)

Mar. The Queen attending,
Yes, we three have but lately left
The towers of fair Tourraine—
Hither journeyed to Paris.

St. Bris. And now I thank thee, Heaven!
He dares defy me,
And by this sends a challenge!

Mar. O Heavens! Ah, what hear I?

St. Bris. This very day, at Pré aux Clercs,
When the shadows of night shall wrap the heavens,
Here to meet me he will come.

Mau. Then hither shortly he will come.
Yes, with Heaven's aid this wretch
Shall not our toils escape.

St. Bris, (*to Marcel.*) We wait him here.
Conceal this strictly from Nevers, I pray you:
His bridal-day;
I would not he should risk his life
In so dark a fray.

Mau. Nor you as well to punish such a villain;
Surely Heaven divine sanctions still swifter vengeance

St. Bris. What dost thou say?

Mau. Heaven doth will! Come then with me now,
And thou shalt know what sure means
Are now here to end all thy woe! [*Exit into the Chapel*

(*Night comes on: the curfew-bell is heard. Various citizens traverse the stage. An officer, followed by the Night-watch, comes on guard.*)

Night-watch. Retire, all good citizens of Paris,
And shut yourselves within your houses.
Let every noise cease,
Depart in silence,
The hour is sounding!
Hear ye the curfew-bell?

Cho. Retire, etc.

(*The crowd disperses. Soldiers enter one inn: the citizens, women and the soldiers, the other.*)

[*Enter* ST. BRIS *and* MAUREVERT, *from the chapel.*]

St. Bris, (*mysteriously to Maurevert.*) It is then all agreed, you understand me?

Mau. Within the hour our trusty friend
Will wait your coming here. [*Exit.*

[*Enter* VALENTINE *from the porch of the Chapel.*]

Val. O great Heaven, even at the sound of my footfall I tremble!
My brain is sore distraught,
And my heart throbs with fear:
Behind yon shrine, there concealed from view,
Each word fell on mine ear:
'Tis a plot to destroy him,
And I must save him. Surely not him alone!
O Heaven! I must preserve my father.
How can I of his peril warn Raoul.

[*Enter* MARCEL.]

Mar. (*with distress.*) I'll wait for him;
I, too, will join the fight.
If he should fall, I will die with him.

DUETT.

Mar. Here by night alone I wander,
Ah, what sound! footsteps coming yonder!
Prudence counsels to conceal me;
Yes, I'll watch and still be near.

Val. O great Heaven, pity my anguish!
The dread moment fast approaches;
How, ah how, shall I inform him
All I know and all I fear?

Mar. Who goes there?

Val. Oh what good fortune!
'Tis the voice of good Marcel.

Mar. At this hour, in this place,
Who calls on me? who goes there?

Val. Pray come here.

Mar. Who goes there? quick give the word,
Or you shall die.

Val. Raoul. (*Advancing.*)

Mar. Raoul? All is well now. What! a woman!
And veiled too!

Val. Dost thou fear?

Mar. Who I? afraid! No! I am Marcel,
The old sword of Israel,
As all vile infidels know well.

Val. Now hear me, pray.
Raoul hither comes within the hour.

Mar. 'Tis true.

Val. 'Tis for a duel.

Mar. 'Tis true! with men of sin.
But fear not; he'll bravely win.
By aid of his good sword.

Val. Let him not venture hither
Unless good friends are near him. [*Exit Marcel.*

Ah poor victim of passion unrequited!
Of this heart every hope for ever is blighted.
Though to another in sorrow united,
Vainly I strive his dear image to drive from my heart;
Still, untiring, I'll watch over his life and honor
To repay the debt of gratitude I owe him;
And to save him I will gladly life resign.

[*Re-enter* MARCEL.]

Mar. Of his danger I hastened so swiftly to warn him,
But forget that he long ago left his abode.
On this spot he gave orders that I should meet him.
Where to find him I cannot divine—
How to warn him, how to tell him
The peril which surrounds him.
But, O great Heaven, in thy mercy
Oh guide aright my footsteps!
These assassins will surely here assail him;
Then his servant to him shall be near.
He will call on old Marcel to defend him in vain;
He will die! he will die!
I will wait, I will wait;
But alone, what, alas! can I do?
O great Heaven! this one boon
Grant that I his peril freely may share—
Let me die by his side!
O gracious Heaven! I pray thee
Grant my prayer; have mercy, pray!

Val. Thou knowest enough; farewell!

Mar. No: tell me first, who art thou?

Val. I am a poor woman, O good Marcel, who loves him,
And who for him would give her life away.

Mar. Is this true?

Val. Ah! my bosom is tortured with anguish
That no language can ever give expression,
While in torments, increasing, I languish
In the conflict 'twixt duty and love
To preserve one whose life I must cherish.
I betray both a parent and honor;
Every hope upon earth now doth perish!
All I ask is for pardon above.

Mar. Grieve thee not, grieve not, noble child;
Marcel, his wrong toward thee confessing,
Here gives thee now an old man's blessing;
Yes, his blessing and his love.
Weep not, weep not, I implore thee!
Heaven may yet to peace restore thee.
It shall be my humble prayer,
For, whatever thy creed, 'tis from above.
Till now I even did believe it
That all women were born to deceive us;
But in her face truth is radiant;
Heaven's truth shines in her eyes.

[*Exit* VALENTINE, *taking refuge in the Chapel.*

Some great danger is near us,
Though what it is, I cannot tell;
Thou must be watchful,
Be firm, old soldier!
Boldly dare all to save him thou loves't so well.
Heaven! he comes, and St. Bris.

St. Bris, (to Raoul). Ah! we are met
At the appointed hour! 'Tis well.

Rao. And had you then a doubt
That I'd keep my plighted promise?

Mar. (aside.) How can I their treachery frustrate,
And warn him of his danger?

Rao. Thou here, my brave old Marcel?

Mar. Yes. From Heaven there came an angel
Foretelling me of danger lurking round us.

Rao. Thou art surely mad, Marcel;
These gentlemen the rules of combat know.
I leave to you, my lordships,
Confiding in your faith, *(turning to the seconds.)*

SEPTETTE.

All. In our good cause, with faith relying,
In life or death the foe defying,
Content by right to stand or fall,
While thus our just quarrel defending
On our good swords only depending,
Each for himself and Heaven for us all.

Mar. (aside.) Alas! what grief now rends my bosom!
Weep, O Marcel; Heaven does not hear you.
For him, good Lord, oh heed Thou my cries;
Look down in mercy from the skies.

All. And whoever may fall by the sword,
No, no quarter, nor mercy show,
It is agreed! It is agreed!

Meru and St. Bris. With fear their faces now are paling,
Their boasted courage now is failing,

All. Your vile boast will soon be ending;
Come on; let each himself defending;
Let's haste to fight, this combat ending;
Fight on until each foeman falls.

(Just as they are on the point of fighting, MARCEL *sees some one coming, and throws himself between the combatants.)*

Mar. Hold! some one hither approaches.

(RAOUL, *his seconds and* MARCEL *are surrounded by the followers of* MAUREVERT.)

Mar. 'Tis most accursed treachery! but tremble,
For Heaven doth see you.

(From the inn on the right is heard the song of the Huguenots.)

Cho. (inside.) Rataplan! long live the war!
We drink to Coligny.

Mar. (knocking loudly at the door of the inn.) Coligny our defender of faith,
Now haste! the foe is rising:
O Thou who art our only guide,
Oh grant us victory by Thy side!

St. Bris. What ho! Brave students, haste,
Now haste to help us!
This is treachery most perfidious!
Students. Yes! we come!

(*The Catholics come out from the inn on the left—the Huguenots from that on the right. They look at each other in threatening attitudes.*)

CHORUS OF DISPUTANTS.

All. We are here. Begone, ye varlets!
Catholics. Go, ye regiment of hypocrites,
Mutterers of prayer!
Hug. Go, and put up your weapons,
Ye vile cowards' heirs.
Cath. Ye honorable Calvins!
Hug. Ye heathenish papists!
Cath. We'll burn the infidels!
Hug. The impostors shall die!
Cath. (*women.*) You supping in the barracks
With unbelievers vile!
Hug. (*women.*) While you in public-houses
Are revelling the while!
Cath. Hence away, degraded women!
Hug. Hold your tongues, ye shameless hussies,
Ye hypocrites of bigots.
Cath. Ye Huguenotish jewels, hence away!
Hug. Ye mistresses of bigots!
All. Our brains with fire are burning.
Hence away! be silent, hence away!
Death to all who resist us—
Yes, death to the bigots, death to all!

(*At this moment the royal guards enter, bearing torches, preceding the Queen. The disputants desist.*)

Urb. Hold, I pray. Desist! the Queen is now approaching.
Marg. How now! even, here in Paris,
'Neath the eyes of my brother,
This brawling party spirit
Must I still have to fear?
I cannot even enter my own palace
But these sounds of wild strife must grate on mine ear.
St. Bris, (*pointing to Raoul.*) And who for this is to blame?
With him must be the blame;
And I am forced to ask my Queen for justice.
Rao. (*pointing to St. Bris.*) The fault must rest with him
Who did the assault begin!
Against their treachery defenceless
I but drew for my honor.
Marg. O Heaven! whom can I credit?
Who here can solve this doubt?
Who here can prove it?
Mar. That proof 'tis I can give you.
These men by treachery and guile
Would slay my master.

St. Bris. Thou liest!
Mar. There was a lady
On that spot did warn me,
And that lady hither comes.
(*Pointing to* VALENTINE, *who is seen leaving the Chapel.*)

[*Enter* VALENTINE.]

St. Bris. My daughter!
Cho. O great Heavens!
St. Bris. How audacious! 'Tis incredible!
O perfidious!
Rao. Can this be true?
Marg. Raoul, she loved you only.
Val. My Queen, have mercy, pray.
Rao. But her breach of faith and honor
Which I myself did witness at the house of Nevers?
Marg. She went to plead for release
From these nuptials so hated.
St. Bris. Therefore since early morn
She hath been safely wedded;
Another she hath wedded.
Cho. Another? Ah, gracious Heaven! (*Music is heard.*)
St. Bris. But, hark! do ye hear it?
The bridegroom approaches;
Hither comes a proud escort.
Yes, I hear even now those tones so exulting,
And well doth such splendor repay for insulting;
Such pomp is well worthy of San Bris and Nevers.

(*A brilliant nuptial suite approaches;* NEVERS *steps forward.*)

Nev. (*to Valentine.*) Most noble lady
Ah come where joy and hope now await you;
Be then true to your vows,
And accept now of mine:
My happiness and bliss
Will encompass thine.
(*To the suite.*) Our friends, who here await us,
With their presence to fête us.
(*To Valentine.*) I will pledge life to thee,
And I'll never prize other joys
Above the rosy silken bonds
Of thy sweet love.

(*All pay their homage to the bride.* NEVERS *takes* VALENTINE *by the hand, followed by* ST. BRIS *and the cortège.*)

Marg., Urb., St. Bris and Cho.
May kind Heaven ever shed blessings over them!
May content, peace and joy gird them round!
May no care ever annoy, but before them
In their path oh may love still be found!
Loved and happy, we gladly all hail ye;
May no sorrows in life ever assail ye,
But may joy be your lot now for ever,
Such as true love alone can assure!
Life, long life, to love and beauty! Viva!

Students and Soldiers. Away with peace and quiet!
With revelry and riot,
And battle's fell disquiet,
Until our latest breath.

(*The bridal cortège departs, anxiously observed by the crowd.* RAOUL, *supported by* MARCEL, *seems a prey to grief. The soldiers of both parties from opposite sides regard each other with threatening attitudes.*)

[END OF THE THIRD ACT.]

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE.—*A room in the Castle of* DE NEVERS, *decorated with family portraits; a large door at the farther end. On the left, a door leading to* VALENTINE'S *apartments; on the right, a door covered with tapestry, and a window overlooking the street.*

[*Enter* VALENTINE *from her apartment, with an air of profound pensiveness.*]

Val. At length, O Heaven! I'm alone with my grief!
To this eternal sorrow.
'Tis thy hand has condemned me, O father.
Raoul alone I loved;
To another thou my hand hath given!
O Thou to whom in vain I've prayed
In all my misery—
Thou, who in spite of prayer,
This fatal marriage permitted—
High Heaven, oh deign at last some light boon to my woe,
And over dark Memory's page oblivion to bestow!

ROMANCE.

A prey to grief which I can banish never,
My love the only thought I ponder o'er;
And tho' I know from that love I must sever,
Yet while I'd fly, while I strove to forget, I love the more!
Alas! Ye Powers who know my inmost feeling,
Of this poor heart each throb revealing,
Vain is the help I now implore;
For while to Heaven in prayer I'm kneeling,
The while I pray I love him more!

[*Enter* RAOUL *from the door in the centre.*]

Val. (*on discovering Raoul.*) Gracious Heaven! is it thou
Or is it but a vision that doth haunt every thought,
And still pursues me?

Rao. Yes, 'tis I who come in darkness of the night,
Gliding round like a felon,
Borne down with weight of sorrow,
Yet still existing on, o'erwhelmed by grim despair.

Val. But what would you with me?

Rao. Nothing. I hoped to see you ere I die.
Val. What hear I? Thou canst not mean it!
But my father? and Nevers?
Rao. Yes, that I may meet them here I know full well.
Val. Inflexible they are still. They'll kill thee! Ah, fly, then!
Rao. No, here I await them.
Val. Hear you not footsteps coming? fly, then!
Rao. No, I remain here and will brave all peril!
Val. My father! alas, my husband! for me,
For my honor, oh conceal thee, I pray.
(*Raoul hides himself behind the tapestry.*)

[*Enter* St. Bris, Nevers, Tavannes, *followed by Noblemen, Catholics, etc.*]

St. Bris, (*to the Nobles.*) Yes, by order of the Queen, in this place we assemble.
The time has now arrived when the plot must be known.
For the project which brings us salvation for ever
Is worthy of the lady on the throne.
Val. I tremble!
St. Bris. Leave us now, my good daughter.
Val. Ah, father!
Nev. Pray, why? Her ardent zeal for our faith
And for our country, must surely be assurance
We may trust her most freely. Of Heaven and of the Queen
We the orders may reveal.

BENEDICTION OF THE SWORDS.

St. Bris. From trouble and from woe,
And from this impious conflict, you will, like me,
Swear your country to free.
Nobles. Yes, we will!
St. Bris. To save our gracious King,
To save our faith from ruin, you will, like me,
Now swear their guard to be?
Nobles. Yes, we will!
St. Bris. 'Tis well! the sword is swung on high,
Threatening vengeance on their heads,
And every Huguenot shall then fall,
While far and near our fury spreads,
Far and near all must die.
Nev. But who is't condemns them?
St. Bris. 'Tis Heaven!
Nobles, 'Tis Heaven!
Nev. And who will strike the blow?
St. Bris. You.
Nobles. We?
Nev. We? I?
St. Bris. With sacred zeal and ardor
Let now your souls be burning;
God wills it, God commands it,
That our faith reign supreme in the land.
Whet your swords to the work of vengeance;
Let the blood of the impious flood the city.
'Tis God who doth command their death,
And the King—the King and our faith!

Nev. Can I aid this impious work of vengeance?
Can I break my sacred oath, once plighted!
Nor for faith, nor for King! O great Heaven!
Can I thus for treachery fight?
O great Heaven! save the right!

Val. Thou his fury restraining,
Heaven, in mercy now deigning,
Oh have pity on me!
I call on Thee, gracious Heaven; aid the right!

Tav. Like thee boldly I swear it,
And I hourly will dare it
For our faith now to fight.

Cho. Great Heaven! oh save our faith!
We our faith will defend; will obey our King—
For our faith and our King!

St. Bris. On you may the King with faith depend?

Nobles. Yes, we swear.

St. Bris. And I will lead you to the end.

Nobles. We'll follow you.

Val. and St. Bris. But how, Nevers?
You only silent remaining?

Val. (*aside.*) What does he mean? I sink with fear.

Nev. We must strike down our foes face to face,
Bravely meet them:
We seek the soldier's wreath,
But not assassin's brand.

St. Bris. But the King would command it.

Nev. He would command in vain
That my name I should stain.
On these old walls around ye
My forefathers brave ye behold,
Whose portraits so grim now surround ye;
Full many a valiant hero,
But no assassins vile.

St. Bris. Then through you will our purpose be basely betrayed.

Nev. No! ne'er was this good blade
For murder ever made.
Take it, it is there. (*Unsheathing his sword and throwing it at his feet.*)
Between us Heaven be judge.

Val. From this day I'll confide in thee.
Away from here—a secret I would tell thee.

St. Bris. I dare not trust him more:
Our plans he would discover.
Till morning's dawn
Be sure you guard him well.

Val. Ah now may Heaven their angry feelings soothe.

Nev. In Honor's path untiring,
With courage faith inspiring,
Though I fail in duty to my King,
No, fear not for me,
Though I fail to obey the King.

Tav. My heart with fury firing,
In duteous faith desiring
To obey our great King.

St. Bris. Your hearts with fury firing,
In duteous faith desiring,
Yes, in duty unto our King—
To obey, obey our great King.

Val. Their hearts with fury firing,
New fears my heart inspiring,
Will kind Heaven no mercy bring?

Cho. Our hearts with fury firing,
In duteous faith desiring
To obey our great King.

(*Soldiers surround* NEVERS *and lead him off.*)

St. Bris. And you who here have sworn to do the will of Heaven,
Ye noble hearts, whose zeal is true and fearless,
Citizens and soldiers, to my commands attend you:
Now through the town, where'er these rebels meet,
Silent and cautious fill each lane and street;
At the signal-bell, yes, yes, strike on every hand.

Cho. Yes, we'll strike on every hand.

St. Bris, (*addressing some of the officers.*) You, De Besme, with your friends
Quick into the inn must fly;
For Coligny
Must be the first to die.

Cho. Yes, yes, he first shall die!

St. Bris, (*addressing others.*) You to the Tour de Nesle,
Where mingling in the throng you'll find
Our deadliest foes;
For thither they repair,
With a festal they prepare
To fête the Queen and the King of Navarre;

Cho. We'll to the Tour de Nesle.

St. Bris. Silence! Now mark me well!
When first from St. Germain
The solemn peal of bells pours forth o'er hill and plain,
Telling aloud of deep and dire alarms;
In silent night then call the men to arms;
But let each do well his part,
And by their example fire each brave heart.
I trust all to your courage,
And when at length from Auxerrois
The sacred bell of warning
You hear for the second time alarming,
Then sword in hand arise,
On our foes accursed falling.
Arise, and let the traitors fall;
Arise in might and slay them all!
'Tis Heaven that calls;
The path lies clear and well before ye.
With Heaven for guide,
To where faith and honor call!

Val. O Heaven, direct me how to save him!
He hears their plot and yet cannot escape;
Could I but know what course to take to save him!
O gracious Heaven, now guard him from danger;

Oh save Raoul!
For him alone I tremble.

(*The door in front opens, and three Monks approach carrying a basket of white scarfs.*)

Monks. Honor and glory to the brave!
Honor and glory to them our cause who save,
Who draw the sword in Heaven's cause,
And thus uphold its laws.

(*They all draw their swords; the Monks bless them.*)

St. Bris and the Monks. Swords of the faithful thus consecrated,
Bathed in their faithless blood your shining blades shall be.
Soon the Most High shall strike down this impious race;
Blessed be ye! Heaven pour its blessings on ye!

St. Bris, (*pointing to the scarf and the white cross.*) This scarf of snowy whiteness,
This cross of gleaming brightness,
The tokens be of the heralds of Heaven!

St. Bris and the Monks. No pardon and no grace!
Strike all and pity none
Tho' boldly they may face,
Or coward-like may run.

Cho. We'll strike, we'll strike!

St. Bris and the Monks. Tho' humbly they pray,
Or suppliant they fall,
No pity and no quarter.
Send all unto the slaughter.
Slay all; ye must slay all:
Be it mother, be it child,
Curses fall on them all!
Heaven, yes Heaven doth will it so.

Cho. Heaven doth will, Heaven ordains it!
Strike without mercy,
Slaughter them all!
Heaven will pardon bestow,
Let whatever befall:
Be it children or mother,
Cursed be one or the other;
For this will Heaven give pardon,
Whatever may us befall.

St. Bris and one of the Monks. Now silence, my children!
Be cautious, move ye in secret;
Let not your steps be heard.

Cho. With sacred zeal and ardor
Let now your souls be burning;
God wills it, God commands it:
Our faith reigns supreme in the land:
Your swords whet to the work of vengeance,
Let the blood of the impious flood the city.
'Tis God who doth command their death—
The King, yes, the King and our faith.
Silence keep, cautious be,
Caution lest we warn our foe.
Heaven calls, yes,
Heaven doth call! [*Exit all in silence.*

(RAOUL *slowly raises the tapestry, and when he perceives that they are all gone, rushes to the door in the centre, but finds it fastened on the other side. He then runs to the door on the left, and meets* VALENTINE *coming out of it.*)

GRAND DUETT.

Val. O Heaven! where would'st thou go?
Raoul, reply to me.
Rao. I must fly; let me save my friends;
I will cheat those foul fiends
Of their dark deadly ends;
We'll fight and die,
But will die sword in hand,
And will meet brand to brand—
Hew them down who pollute our fair land.
Val. But among these foes is my father,
Is the husband whom I must still revere.
Would'st slay those whom I hold most dear?
Rao. I would all impious traitors slay.
Val. Heaven's mandate they obey?
Rao. (*ironically.*) Heaven's mandate they obey?
And is this thy creed,
Of which you boast so proudly—
A creed which sanctions crime
And pardon grants for slaughter?
Val. Ah! pray thee speak not thus;
'Tis Heaven who pitying hears
The prayer of one who seeks to save
A life so noble. Oh stay you here!
Rao. I must not stay.
Val. Know you not that death awaits you?
Rao. To remain would be base
When duty, honor call. Never! no!
Now danger threatens,
And time is flying,
Let me go! let me go!
Ah! I must away!
Val. Thus undefended,
You surely perish;
Mercy, pray! mercy, pray!
Ah in mercy stay, Raoul!
Rao. Ah! misery!
Val. Thou art my only hope on earth now.
Rao. It is my brethren whom they murder.
Val. And can'st thou leave me here to die?
Rao. Detain me not, but let me fly.
Val. I thee will save.
Rao. 'Tis Honor calls.
Val. Thou shalt not fly.
Rao. I hence must fly, 'tis Honor calls.
Val. For pity's sake, oh leave me not thus here to die.

(RAOUL *runs toward the door, but is followed by* VALENTINE, *who stops him.*)

Val. No, Raoul, from this threshold

Thy steps never shall pass:
I'll in death cling to thee.

Rao. To hear is to sin.

Val. And do I not sin also?

Rao. Heaven!

Val. Yet still I here remain, and in this dreadful hour
I think of naught but thee,
For thou art all to me.
Stay then, Raoul! If still to thee I'm dear,
Know then, if thou shouldst die
I cannot live; stay thee!
I love thee!

Rao. Thou lov'st me, thou lov'st me!
Oh moment of bliss!
Rapture divine enchanting!
Thy words have changed my very fate.
How with joy my heart is beating!
Come, Death, I'll meet thee now;
Here at thy feet, my loved one's feet,
I'll meet thy blow.

Val. (*with terror*). O great Heaven! what have I said!

Rao. Ah! say again,
Ah! say again that thou lov'st me!
From darkness drear
I have awoke to bliss.
For ever now we're united.
Thou'st linked thy fate to mine
For ever; say once again
That thou lov'st me. (*The sound of a distant bell is heard.*)

Val. It is the hour; what can I do? O cruel fate!

Rao. Thou hast told me
Thou dost love me.
In the gloom of despair and of darkness
Come thy words like a light from heaven,
Let me forget all my grief near to thee.

Val. O great Heaven!

Rao. Those sweet words now repeating
To my heart wildly beating,
If I'm dreaming, such sweet visions
Oh never depart; wake me not!

Val. How can I save him?
All these dreams in this hour must now depart.
Ah! 'Tis the hour of horror!
Now all must end in death.

Rao. Night of gladness!

Val. O night of sadness!

Rao. O night of love! let us fly, love:
Say again that thou lov'st me.
Come away.

Val. No. Ah stay thee!

Rao. Come, love! ah come! (*The bell is heard in the distance.*)
Hearest thou that fatal signal?

Val. Oh my heart is chilled with fear.

Rao. Those sounds of sad and dark foreboding.
Now hear you not that cry of fear?
O Heaven! where am I?
Val. Thou'rt near to me, Raoul.
Rao. Ah! that hellish plot!
They murder my friends!
'Tis the signal of death! No! no! no!
No more love, no more joy!
Oh, remorse fills my heart
As for aid from my friends
Now resounds the shrill cry:
"It is I, it is I who betray them!"
'Tis in vain, 'tis in vain I would stay them.
Though I cannot defend them,
Yet with them I'll die.
Val. Ah, Raoul, my despair
Hath no power to touch thy heart,
And thou wilt even here
Now consent from me to part!
From my arms thou mayest fly,
With thy friends now to die;
Yes, thou mayest. But before
Thou dost this my corse thou'lt pass o'er.
Rao. No more love, no more gladness!
Oh remorse! oh what madness!
Val. From me canst thou thus part?
Canst thou break this fond heart? Alas!
From my love wherefore fly?
Canst thou leave me here thus dying?
My despair hath no power
Now to pierce to thy heart.
Oh, remain! They will slay thee,
And in vain thou would'st save them!
Oh, Raoul, mercy, pray!
Do not leave me to die.
Oh, Raoul, I shall die! (*Bell tolls.*)
Rao. Now, away! time is flying!
Val. No!
Rao. See my friends yonder dying!
Val. No!
Rao. It is I who betray them!
Val. No!
Rao. Let me fly now to save them!
Val. No!
Rao. You stay me but in vain.
Val. Thou shalt not go: ah, no!
My heart is torn with pain,
My heart now strike! here is my heart!
Rao. O Heaven! give me courage!

(RAOUL *shows from the window what happens in the street.*)

See'st thou the stream with blood is gory?
See'st thou the dead floating yonder?
Val. Ah! my senses are failing!

Oh what cursed misfortune!
Raoul, they will kill thee!
Ah, I pray, I die! ah! (*She swoons.*)

Rao. (*in the utmost affright.*) Come back to life! How act?
(*in despair.*) Oh what moment of terror!
Alas, can I depart?
Can I leave her to die?
No! I fly, I fly!
God, watch Thou o'er her now!
God, I now implore thee. [*Exit from the window.*

[END OF THE FOURTH ACT.]

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE.—*A cemetery—on one side, a church, with a practicable door; on the other, a gate opening into a square.*

[*Men, women and children cross the stage, and take refuge in the church.*]

Rao. (*entering from one side.*) Is't thou, my faithful Marcel?
I did not think here to see thee.

Mar. (*entering from the other side.*) Ah, my good master, art thou still alive?

Rao. Art wounded then?

Mar. I know not.

Rao. Oh, vengeance!

Mar. What sayest thou?
Bands of soldiers and assassins
On every side surround our friends;
That sacred temple is their last and only refuge;
The women and helpless children crowding round in tears
Pray in peace there to die.
Come on; let us join them:
Naught for us remains but to partake their doom.

[*Enter* VALENTINE *with hair dishevelled, and breathless.*]

Val. Where would'st thou go?

Rao. To glory.

Mar. To be martyred.

Val. No, thou must not die.
No, now I may love thee without shame, without crime.

Rao. But Nevers?

Mar. Oh that generous man!
He bravely fought my life to save,
And for his noble loyalty
He has found but a soldier's grave.

Rao. Nevers is dead?

Val. Oh come then, away!

Rao. No, I remain here; I stay to die with him.

Val. O Heaven! and must I see thee die,
Now that I may thus dare such blissful hopes to cherish,
Now that my heart is thine

By every rite divine?
And thou canst leave me now? Ah, no!
But thou hast yet to learn
How in woman's weak heart love may burn.
'Tis well; here thou shalt know
How affection may glow,
Nor cease with life to flow.
Now when life and love are smiling,
Not so thy faith from me beguiling,
Since life is naught to thee,
Since from my love thou'lt flee,
Since thou carest not for me,
In life or death no more our souls shall parted be.
Thou my faith despisest; I will now welcome thine:
Heaven now our hearts uniting,
My life I'll give with thine;
On earth no more divided,
Nor in eternity.

Rao. Oh what bliss!

Mar. Yes, 'tis Heaven that has thus enlightened her mind.

Val. Yes, Heaven smiles upon my new-born faith.
Oh guide my footsteps now,
O good Marcel, my father,
Oh hear my sacred vow!
Give us thy blessing now.

Rao. No minister his hand can on us press;
Do thou with holy hand our union bless.

Mar. Yes, with joy do I accept
Here this office so sacred.
Thy faithful servant will
In face of Heaven the holy rite fulfill.

Cho. (*of women in the church.*) O Thou who art our only guide
And guard from every earthly ill,
Oh be our shield:
Thy servants do thee implore!

Mar. Dost thou hear them,
How in love and pure faith
To Heaven their prayers arise?
And while in prayer, awaiting death,
To God they give all praise.
May He amidst this scene
Direct your hearts aright,
While your hands I unite
Amidst this night of darkness.
By this rite you will be,
Though now parted on earth,
In eternity united.

Rao. and Val. Yes, we know we shall be
Still united in heaven.

Mar. Do your hearts now renounce
All hope of mortal gladness,
Every earthly desire,
And to death for our faith

Thus to God are you plighted?

Rao. and Val. Yes, for God, for our faith
We will welcome death.

Mar. Will you see without fear
The sword and flame approach you,
And will never abjure
Or deny your sworn faith,
E'en in martyrdom's torture?

Rao. and Val. Heaven will strength impart
By the love in our heart.

Cho. (*of women in the church.*) O Thou who art our only guide
And guard from every—

(*Here the Chorus is interrupted by a loud din of arms and cries.*)

Chorus (*of assassins who have entered the church.*) Now abjure, Huguenots; 'tis Heaven doth will it!
Now abjure, or you die; 'tis Heaven doth will it!
Now abjure, Huguenots, your faith denying:
Now abjure or you die; in vain you're flying.

Val. (*looking through the window.*) Oh how cruel! Those women—
Ah, have mercy, ye murderers! Oh hold!

Cho. of Assassins. Now abjure, Huguenots!

Cho. of Women. O Heaven, do thou protect us!

(*Firing heard from within the church.*)

Val., Mar. and Raoul. Their song still resounds.

Val. See that old man is praying,
That monk so fierce and gloomy.
Heavens! they've killed him!
O Heaven, have mercy!
O Heaven, now aid them!
How vain all my prayers!

Mar. Now they sing no more.

(*They all remain in perfect silence, burying their faces in their hands; then* MARCEL, *as if inspired, looks toward heaven.*)

Mar. See the effulgent gates of heaven now wide are flying!
Glory to the Highest! hear the clarion trumpet sounding!

Rao. and Val. See the effulgent rays of faith his face illuming!
Light eternal his brow now surrounding,
While his voice like a clarion resounding,
Like an angel he leads us to their side.
O angel, we hear ye;
The pathway is near ye.

Mar. Hear the angel choir resounding
As they welcome the martyrs to their side.

All. He guides us, he leads us,
O angels, we hear ye!
The pathway is near ye;
To heaven he guides us;
He leads us to glory.
O Death, thy terrors we defy:
O Earth, from all thy cares we fly!

(*The gate flies open, and a crowd of assassins rush upon the stage.*)

Cho. Now abjure, Huguenots—'tis Heaven doth will it—or you die.

Val., Rao. and Mar. No, no, we do not fear ye.
In faith we will not falter,
For Heaven is our guide.
See the effulgent gates, etc.
Hosanna! Death now we defy,
Hosanna! Earth, from thee we fly
Oh welcome, Death!
Come, strike us and kill us:
Hosanna! now to earth adieu!

(*All rush off on the right; at the same time firing is heard on the left.*)

SCENE THE LAST.—*A street on the Quays of Paris in* 1572. *Starlight night.*

Cho. (*of soldiers from without.*) By the sword and by the fagot
Let every one now slay the heretics:
No mercy show unto the foe.
Ye true and faithful Catholics
Heaven doth smile on every blow.

(*During this chorus* RAOUL *appears on the right mortally wounded, supported by* VALENTINE *and* MARCEL.)

St. Bris, (*entering on the left at the head of a company of musketeers.*) Who goes there?

Val. (*supporting the drooping head of* RAOUL, *and placing her hand on his mouth to prevent an answer.*) Ah, in mercy, silence!

Rao. (*making a final struggle.*) We are Huguenots!

Mar. and Val. And we too!

St. Bris, (*to the soldiers.*) In the name of the King, fire!

(*The soldiers fire on them, and* VALENTINE *and* MARCEL *fall mortally wounded.*)

Val. Heaven! my father!

St. Bris, (*rushing toward her.*) Ah, what see I? my daughter!

Val. (*raising herself with difficulty.*) Yes, 'tis I. Pity, pardon I implore!
Father, in heaven I'll pray for you. (*Dies.*)

Urb. (*from without.*) The Queen approaches!

(*At this moment the Queen enters, borne on a litter, returning from a ball at the Louvre. At the sight of the lifeless* VALENTINE, *she screams and makes signs to the soldiers to stop.*)

Cho. By the sword, by the flame and fagot
Let every one now slay the heretics:
Now death to them—destruction!
Heaven doth smile on every blow.

THE END.